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U.S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce

Promotion of trade with Latin America

Washington

1922

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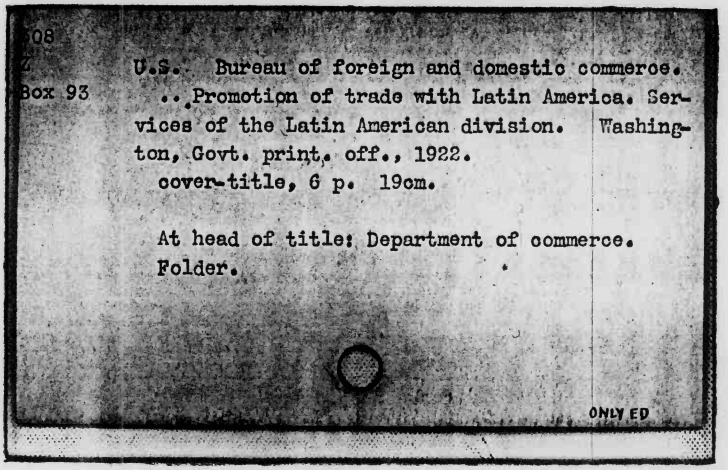
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND
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PROMOTION OF TRADE WITH LATIN AMERICA

SERVICES OF THE
LATIN AMERICAN
DIVISION

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1922

The regional divisions of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce furnish business men with information on foreign markets. They prepare financial and budgetary studies, report on market tendencies, political and economic developments as they affect the outlook for foreign trade, and the trend of business overseas. The regional divisions also furnish data concerning industries not covered by corresponding Commodity Divisions.

The bureau's regional, commodity, and technical divisions are closely affiliated. As a result, the commercial information given out by the bureau is timely and accurate. Regional information is based upon careful checking of commodity reports, and technical information of immediate interest to only one industry is prepared after carefully weighing the general commercial situation. Direct inquiries, as well as those addressed to the bureau's district or cooperative offices, will receive prompt attention, as all the divisions of the bureau are in close touch with these offices.

Business men interested in developing foreign markets on a conservative basis should follow closely the cable summaries prepared by the regional divisions and published in COMMERCE REPORTS.

U.S. Dept. of Com. 1922

LATIN AMERICAN DIVISION.

The region covered by this division embraces not only the 20 Latin American Republics, but the European possessions and dependencies on the mainland south of the United States and in the adjacent islands, including the Bermudas. The importance of this region in the foreign trade of the United States is not due so much to the quantity as to the classes of goods exchanged. While many of its countries were settled and enjoyed a considerable intellectual and commercial development at a much earlier date than did the United States, their progress has been slower, and from a marketing standpoint they may be generally regarded as new countries. Their products and their requirements for goods in exchange are to-day much the same as were those of the United States fifty or sixty years ago. They are producers of raw materials—animal, vegetable, and mineral. Their needs are for the finished products of the world and for capital further to develop the resources of their fields, forests, and mountains. Not only do they require the product of our industries, but on account of their proximity to this country some of them are admirable proving grounds for new American ventures into foreign fields.

The need for an agency for the collection and dissemination of information on this region was long ago recognized by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, and led to the establishment of the Latin American Division in 1917. To facilitate the work of the division its region has been subdivided, each subdivision embracing a group of countries of like characteristics as to resources and trade conditions. So far as possible each group is treated separately, having a certain personnel assigned to it. Each member of the

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staff thus becomes a specialist in his territory. The division staff cooperates closely with the field staff, guiding and being guided by it in the general endeavor to render service of value to the business community. Through established contact with business executives throughout the country their exact needs are learned and made known to the field force for its guidance.

Services Afforded by the Division.

The first endeavor of the division at all times is to be of service to business executives, those who outline the policies of their respective establishments and who must keep informed on every condition or activity affecting economic, financial, or trade conditions in any foreign field in which they are engaged. As a basis for this service, detailed analyses are made of the trend of business in each of the countries of Latin America. Studies are made of their finances, crop conditions, mineral production, industries, and of whatever may affect their producing and their purchasing power. Opportunities for new investments of American capital are noted and studies made to determine their advisability. In a word, attention is given to all those elements which directly or indirectly affect or are likely to affect American enterprise in those countries.

Another service which the division has often been called upon to perform is the study and analysis of various countries as to the methods of distribution best suited to each with respect to a given line of goods. In like manner, manufacturers who have not been exporters, but who desire to enter foreign markets, are advised as to the points at which their initial efforts may be directed most advantageously. The division has also given valuable assistance to exporters, and particularly to those new in this field, in planning their advertising and selling activities. To the banker it has afforded comprehensive studies on the trade, industrial development, and resources of municipalities, States, and countries, of

political activities affecting their trade and finances, and of their internal and external debts and annual receipts and expenditures.

Sources of Information.

The bureau is now represented by commercial attachés in the following capitals in Latin America:

Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Habana, Cuba.
Lima, Peru.
Mexico City, Mexico.
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
Santiago, Chile.

Each of these offices has a staff of trade commissioners or assistant trade commissioners, clerks, and stenographers, and by means of periodical and special reports by mail and by cable keeps the bureau advised of changes in economic and trade conditions and of opportunities for American business in its territory. The increasing demand for an extension of this service in Latin America has resulted in an increased appropriation by Congress for the present fiscal year, and new trade commissioner offices are to be established at an early date at Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Bogota, Colombia.

In addition to those of its own offices, the bureau enjoys the services of 135 consular offices maintained in Latin America by the State Department. It is the policy of that department to place specially selected men, known for their ability along trade-promotion lines, at those capitals and important trade centers at which this bureau has no representative of its own. Still other departments of the Government have agencies which are utilized by the division in the collection of trade information, and close contact is kept with the official publications of Latin American Governments and with the local press of the region. These publications are carefully scanned, and material of value to American business is abstracted for dissemination.

Dissemination of Information.

The information collected in the division from various sources is carefully digested and prepared for dissemination to the American business public. That of wide general interest is published in COMMERCE REPORTS or released to the press. A monthly cabled survey of economic conditions and review of happenings of the preceding month which may affect trade directly or indirectly is received from commercial attachés in five of the more important countries of Latin America. These are published in COMMERCE REPORTS on the first Monday of each month.

Studies or reports of a little less general interest, or which on account of their length may not be given adequate treatment in COMMERCE REPORTS or in the press, are issued from time to time as Trade Information Bulletins and sent to individuals and firms listed in the division as having interest in Latin American affairs. Information of interest to a more restricted field is published in mimeographed circulars or by letters to district and cooperative offices and to individuals and firms known to be interested.

Another means of dissemination is by consultation with business executives who call at the bureau in person. The chief of the division and some of his staff have been engaged in business in various countries of Latin America, and in general the members of the staff are of proved ability and experience in trade. Business men who visit the bureau can discuss their foreign-trade problems with these specialists, and have placed at their disposal the extensive files of reports, maps, and other data maintained in the division. The service rendered through these personal contacts is perhaps the most satisfactory to its clients of any afforded by the division. Opportunity for personal consultation is widened by visits made from time to time to district and cooperative offices, through which advance

notice of the visit is given to the business com munity.

The American business man having foreign trade problems is invited to call on the bureau for assistance in their solution, presenting them in person, by mail, or by wire, as best suits his convenience and requirements. However, it is suggested that he first consult the district office in his region, or the cooperative office in his city if there be one. In many cases the official in charge of the office will be able quickly to supply the desired information from his own knowledge or from the material in his files. Even when he can not do this his knowledge of the resources and machinery of the bureau in Washington enables him to assist the client in formulating his inquiry and forwarding it directly to the proper source of information.

A list of the bureau's district and cooperative offices is printed on the following page.

DISTRICT OFFICES

NEW YORK: 734 United States Customhouse
NEW ENGLAND: 1801 Customhouse, Boston
CHICAGO: 1424 First National Bank Building
ST. LOUIS: 1210 Liberty Central Trust Co. Building
NEW ORLEANS: 214 Customhouse
SAN FRANCISCO: 306 Customhouse
SEATTLE: 515 Lowman Building
MANILA, P. I.

COOPERATIVE OFFICES

AKRON, OHIO: Chamber of Commerce
ATLANTA, GA.: Chamber of Commerce
BALTIMORE, MD.: Export and Import Board of Trade
BRIDGEPORT, CONN.: Manufacturers' Association
CHATTANOOGA, TENN.: Foreign Trade Secretary, Southern Railway System
CINCINNATI, OHIO: Chamber of Commerce
CLEVELAND, OHIO: Chamber of Commerce
COLUMBUS, OHIO: Chamber of Commerce
DALLAS, TEX.: Chamber of Commerce
DAYTON, OHIO: Dayton Chamber of Commerce
EL PASO, TEX.: Chamber of Commerce
FORT WORTH, TEX.: Chamber of Commerce
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.: Chamber of Commerce
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.: Chamber of Commerce
MILWAUKEE, WIS.: Association of Commerce
NEWARK, N. J.: Chamber of Commerce
NORFOLK, VA.: Hampton Roads Maritime Exchange
OMAHA, NEBR.: Chamber of Commerce
PENSACOLA, FLA.: Chamber of Commerce
PHILADELPHIA, PA.: Chamber of Commerce
PITTSBURGH, PA.: Chamber of Commerce
PORTLAND, OREG.: Chamber of Commerce
RICHMOND, VA.: Chamber of Commerce
ROCHESTER, N. Y.: Chamber of Commerce
SYRACUSE, N. Y.: Chamber of Commerce

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